



Praise God summer is almost over. One of the main reasons I was willing to move up to Northern California was because of the cold winters. Despite the hot summer that we had we did have an amazing summer here at First Baptist Church of Westwood.

Please take a few moments to see what we have been doing here lately at FBC Westwood which would not be possible without all of your prayers and support.

## WHAT'S BEEN UP?

Let me update you on what happened this past summer here at FBCW!

Our Vacation Bible School this year was awesome. We had four summer missionaries from throughout the United States spend the week with us and help us out. Our VBS was titled "Journey Off the Map"



and focused on walking with God despite life's adventures. We averaged about 25 kids per night and were able to feed them dinner each night. Most importantly: we were able to tell them about Jesus.

On Saturday August 15<sup>th</sup> our first, of which I am hoping will be an annual, Back 2 School: Supply Giveaway & Block Party. I cannot thank everyone



enough for the support, through prayers and by working the event. Around 80 people total came

out to the outreach and throughout the following weeks leading up to school several other students came by to collect supplies. Thanks to your generosity, about 35 kids were given school supplies. Not only did they receive a basic need in their lives they were given the opportunity to hear the word of God and the hope that it gives.



## WHAT'S COMING UP?

Now that the hectic summer is coming to an end FBCW has several work projects planned. The major project we have planned is to put down a new floor in our fellowship hall. As you can see from the school supply picture it is in much need of a makeover.

As I told you in our last newsletter, another outreach we have been contemplating is a winter clothing outreach where we would take on the task of making sure that every child in Westwood has the clothing necessary to stay warm in winter. I cannot tell you how many times I have seen kids walking to and from school without winter clothing in below freezing weather. Unlike other outreaches we have done we are going to do this one in a on call fashion. Similar to the way a church would do a food pantry. If you know a child who is in need of a winter jacket, boots, gloves and hat within Westwood please have them contact First Baptist Church of Westwood and we make sure they get what they need.

Finally, on October 31<sup>st</sup> we will be having our 2nd annual Halloween Outreach. On the night of Halloween our church will be open and filled with games and candy. It will be a great time of fun for the children to take a break from trick or treating

for their parents. Of course, the central theme of the evening will be Jesus.

## *Inspiration for the Family*

### WORDS OF WISDOM (OR NOT) FROM PASTOR DAN

As some of you already know, the weekend of September 4th through 6th was a very interesting one for myself and two other men from our church.

At some point during the week prior Adrienne Bliss-Williams asked me to drive down to Escondido, CA (outside of San Diego) and help her husband in the process of him moving their stuff to Westwood, where they recently moved. I was cool with it and, along with Jeremiah Rhodes (another church member), hit the road on Friday September 4th with the goal of driving down on that day and returning the next (Saturday the 5th) making it back to Westwood in time to for church Sunday morning.

After dealing with Southern California Traffic we arrived around 5 pm where we meet up with Rufus Williams (Adrienne's Husband). We worked hard that evening and the next morning packing the back of my minivan, a U-haul trailer, and the 1979 Dodge RV which was to pull the trailer. Saturday morning, around 9:30 AM we got ready to leave when, in what should have been a sign of things to come, the RV would not start. Rufus diagnosed the RV with lack of gas syndrome. We got some gas from a neighbor, and we were on our way. For the next 4 hours things went very well. The RV seemed to be running great and completed the first task of climbing over San Bernadino.

About 200 or so miles into our trip, around 3pm, the RV completely stopped running and would not start. We were around 45 miles north of Ridgecrest, 30 miles south of Lone Pine, 87 miles south of Bishop and, thankfully, 6 miles from a 24 hour Mobile Gas Station in a town called Olancha. Immediately the problem solving begins (with me being very little help) and, thanks to the help of a man named Ryan



whose house was on the other side of the barbed wired fence. Rufus and Jeremiah decided that the problem was a broken coil. Upon coming to this conclusion we started making calls to auto

parts stores in an attempt to figure out if they had this part or not. We ended up making it to an O'Reilly's in Ridgecrest just before they closed at 9 pm, purchased the part, and return to the RV. I stood by as Rufus and Jeremiah installed the part and when they started the engine, NOTHING!

Now, at this point we were in something of a pickle. The RV, trailer, and my van were parked on the side of the highway and every time a car or truck drove by I expected us to get hit. It was not a very good place to spend the night. Thanks to God, Ryan returned at around 10:30 and pulled the RV and Trailer off the highway and onto a road that ran parallel to it where we spent the night in the RV.

The next morning (Sunday morning) Rufus attempted to find a rental to pull the trailer the rest of the journey. At this point we had given up on the RV and were planning on having it trashed. The problem Rufus was facing was that nothing was open on Sunday and, because the next day was Labor day. But amazingly Thrifty Rental car had a pickup truck available in Ridgecrest. When we arrived at the Thrifty we found out that the truck was for local use only and we could not use it to finish our trip.

At this point my amazing wife comes into the story. Tabbethia had been preparing for church in my absence. She delegated the rest of the church service to my awesome congregation. I want to give special thanks to Donna Furlong who gave an amazing testimony and Ashley Rhodes (Jeremiah's wife) who lead the music. At about 10 am Tab left our kids with Ashley and began the 7 hour drive from Westwood to the-middle-of-nowhere. About an hour before Tab arrived, a man (whose property we now sat in front of) offered to allow Rufus to

leave the RV on his property (so it would not be impounded) and used his tractor to pull the now trailer-less RV about a half mile or more onto his fenced in property. Just as this was finished Tab pulled up in Errol and Beverly Long's pickup truck, we hooked the trailer up to it, and departed on the 400 mile journey around 5 pm, arriving in Westwood at around 2 am Monday morning.



I think it was very clear that God was attempting to teach all of us something. One Bible verse that came up several times during our impromptu camping trip was 1st Corinthians 10:13 which says, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." There was a time or two, during our adventure, that I wanted to yell out, "HEY GOD, WHAT'S UP? WHERE DID YOU GO? WHY ARE YOU LEAVING US OUT HERE?" Of course, I had to remind myself that things could have been much worse. I started to list some of the blessings I was currently feeling from God. We had the opportunity to witness the amazing night sky including some meteors. The location where we were at, especially after we were moved off the highway, was really nice. It was not too hot (or cold for that matter), the view was pretty amazing, there was a store open 24 hours in case we needed something, I had my Minivan (imagine what it would have been like without any working transportation), and we had/have our God and His family looking out for us. I cannot express how proud I am of my congregation, whom really stepped up when we were in need. No matter how bad things seem to be, I think it is important to remember the blessings we receive every moment of every day from our loving heavenly Father as

well as the love of the family of God.

Yours forever in Christ, Pastor Dan

## *Prayer Requests*

Thanks so much to all of you who have been praying for our church and our ministry to the community of Westwood. Please continue to pray for our FBC Westwood and our ministry throughout the area. Here are some prayer requests for you to pray for.

- That our community responds to the Gospel of Christ & for economic growth to take place in our area.
- Christian Missionaries throughout the world.
- Our Good Shepherd's Club (**which started on Sept. 8th & 18 kids showed up**): That God continues to open the hearts of the children for His message.
- Our Winter Clothing Outreach: For the opportunity to tell people about Jesus as well as provide for a need in our community.
- Our Halloween Outreach: For the opportunity to tell out community about Jesus.
- The continual growth of our church.

## **Final Thoughts**

I want to thank everyone, as I always do, who has helped FBCW over the years and ask that you continue to support us through your prayers.

Let me leave you with this: **Psalm 56:3-4** says, "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

When you are stuck on the side of the road in life, turn to God and put your trust in Him alone.

Continue to pray for FBC Westwood as we serve the Lord in the (REAL) Northern California.

Thank you again & God bless



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